

REMARKS

The above amendments to the above-captioned application along with the following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated September 12, 2003 (U.S. Patent Office Paper No. 5). In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to give due reconsideration to this application, to indicate the allowability of the claims, and to pass this case to issue.

Status of the Claims

Claims 2-7 and 9-13 are currently pending. As outlined above, claims 1 and 8 are being canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, while claims 2, 9, 10, 11, and 12 are being amended to correct formal errors and to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject invention.

Formal Objections or Rejections

Claims 2 to 7 and 9 to 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, for being indefinite, in particular, for failing to point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention.

In response to Examiner's objections made in the Office Action, Applicants have amended the claims as follows: Applicants deleted from claims 2 and 10 to 12 the phrase "by providing a gap". Further, the Applicants deleted from claims 2 and 10 to 12 the feature "in one place in a longitudinal direction". Applicants amended claim 9 to provide proper antecedent basis for elements "gap" and "longitudinal direction". Further yet, Applicants amended claims 10 and 11, per Examiner's suggestions made in sections 6, 7, and 8 of the Office Action.

Applicants respectfully contend that claims 2 to 7 and 9 to 13 are characterized by an electrophoresis medium, formed on the hydrophilic region of the substrate and having a gap in a longitudinal direction.

Based on the above Applicants respectfully submit that they have addressed and remedied all the informalities pointed out by the Examiner in the Office Action.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 1 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Oh, U.S. Patent No. 5,904,824 (further, the '824 patent). Applicants canceled claims 1 and 8. Therefore, the above referenced rejection is rendered moot.

Other Matters

Applicants respectfully thank the Examiner for indicating the allowability of claims 2 to 7 and 9 to 13.

Applicants have accepted the Examiner's suggestion made in the Office Action, and claim 9 has been rewritten in independent form, including all the features of the base claim and of any intervening claims.

As outlined above, Applicants have remedied the informalities present in claims 2 to 7 and 10 to 13. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2 to 7 and 9 to 13 are allowable.

Conclusion

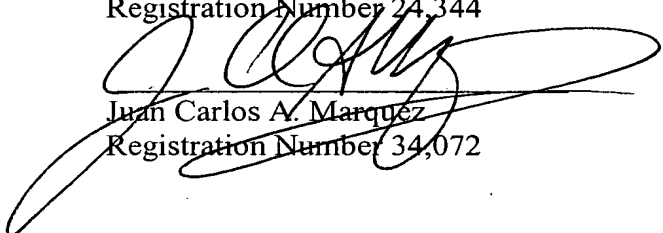
In view of all the above, Applicants respectfully submit that certain clear and distinct differences as discussed exist between the present invention as now claimed and the prior art references upon which the rejections in the Office Action rely. These differences are more than sufficient that the present invention as now claimed would not have been anticipated nor rendered obvious given the prior art. Rather, the present invention as a whole is distinguishable, and thereby allowable over the prior art.

Favorable reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully solicited. Should there be any outstanding issues requiring discussion that would further the prosecution and allowance of the above-captioned application, the Examiner is invited to

contact the Applicant's undersigned representative at the address and phone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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